



# Guidance on Promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

## Executive Performance Management

### Background

In fiscal year (FY) 2021, executive performance plans were updated to include a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) sub-element under the leading people (SES), and technical leadership (SL/ST) critical elements. In FY 2023, the DE&I sub-element was updated to incorporate “accessibility,” consistent with the [2021 Executive Order on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility \(DEI&A\) in the Federal Workforce](#) and [NASA Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility](#). The term accessibility refers to the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them.

### Purpose of the updated SES and SL/ST DEI&A sub-element

The updated SES and SL/ST DEI&A sub-element:

- Integrates diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEI&A) as a key strategic mission and operational priority at all levels of the organization.
- Promotes and fosters an inclusive work environment where employees are welcomed, valued, and respected for their individual and cultural differences, and employees and stakeholders can fully and independently access facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services.
- Creates awareness of and prioritizes DEI&A and equal employment opportunity in the recruitment, hiring, development, recognition, and management of the workforce.
- Models behaviors that accept differences, builds trust, and encourages staff to address issues and seek cooperative resolutions.
- Implements prompt, effective, and proactive measures to ensure compliance with EEO laws, regulations, Executive Orders, policies (including enabling requests for reasonable accommodation, where appropriate), and works toward the success of [NASA Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility](#).
- Identifies unfair policies, programs, and practices that impede equal opportunity and removes all barriers to opportunities and benefits for underserved groups.

## How to use this guidance

This guidance includes examples of how executives might meet the expectations of this updated DEI&A sub-element. The sample actionable behaviors below demonstrate support and advocacy of DEI&A. These examples are not exhaustive, and appropriate actionable behaviors and expectations are not limited to what is listed.

Executives can find sample DEI&A performance accomplishments in the [Guidance for Writing Executive Accomplishments document](#) on the [Executive Services page](#).

In addition to the DEI&A sub-element, it is important to understand and meet the full requirements that are aligned with the leading people (SES) and technical leadership (ST/SL) critical elements.

## Examples of actions and behaviors that promote DEI&A

### Encourage DEI&A in the workplace

- Establish an organizational culture that drives systematic fairness, impartiality, and equity for all individuals, including people in underserved communities.
- Be a role model to others and exhibit behaviors in a way that actively supports and promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.
- Adhere to the NASA core value of inclusion; actively articulate and emulate principles of the core value and focus on unity as critical to mission accomplishment.
- Practice allyship, emphasize social justice and inclusion, and strive to advance the interests of underrepresented or marginalized groups.
  - Incorporate more inclusive language and combat forms of prejudice or marginalization against underrepresented groups.
  - Ask others about their experiences; listen with empathy; seek to understand perspectives; engage stand up and speak up as an advocate for employees.
- Actively mentor and seek mentoring relationships with employees of different and diverse backgrounds than oneself. Seek out and achieve authentic and meaningful relationships with people who are different from you.
- Be an active champion of and participate in more advanced voluntary DEI&A activities, such as diversity dialogues and open space conversation.
- Actively listen, attend, engage and support various groups in the workplace such as employee resource groups (ERGs), advisory groups, and relevant committees.

- Foster a working environment of belonging and encourage all employees to fully participate, contribute, grow, and succeed. Advocate for openness both in the workplace and beyond to allow employees to feel safe when sharing dissenting opinions. Allow open space for honest conversations and diversity dialogues.
  - Allow for grace, both giving and receiving, in crucial conversations of sensitive matters to allow for space and safety in two-way dialogues.
  - Actively seek input, perspective, and expertise regarding the work environment and culture from members of your team, including those who are not as active or engaged with regard to sharing their feelings and providing feedback.
  - Welcome and encourage diverse perspectives, alternatives, and dissenting opinions.
  - Protect employees' rights to share and request information.
  - Provide resources to enable all employees to succeed.
  - Identify and consider what motivates employees to ensure a healthy balance of personal and mission success.
  - Support the constructive and respectful resolution of conflict.
- Strengthen all employees' connection to the mission by providing opportunities for them to learn more about and access information on NASA's mission, vision, and strategic goals, and where/how they and their position/role fits into each.
- Actively create a productive work environment within one's own team or organization that is positive, safe, inclusive, promotes diversity, and is free of harassment and bullying (zero tolerance).

**Institutionalize strategies, policies, and procedures that are inclusive and sensitive to the various cultures across the organization**

- Promote the development and advancement of underrepresented groups through nominating and selecting diverse team members for professional development courses, speaking engagements, and training opportunities.
- Assess whether current policies, practices, and procedures are inclusive and sensitive to the various cultures both within and external to the organization and ensure organizational infrastructure, tools, technology, and websites are accessible and 508 compliant, available to all, and ADA compliant. Draft a DEI&A plan and socialize recommendations with agency leadership for integration and prioritization with agency efforts.

- Discuss with selection panels where unconscious biases may exist in the recruitment and hiring process. Debrief after hiring panels convene and have dialogue in the meetings both vertically and horizontally to ensure transparency, fairness, and objectivity.
- Ensure selection panels have diverse membership (individuals holding various positions, individuals across various organizations and/or centers, individuals with diverse backgrounds and/or diverse demographics). Ensure that hiring managers appropriately consider recommendations from diverse hiring panels and that arbitrary hiring decisions are not made.
- Open opportunities to all qualified individuals.
- Develop and identify a diverse internal pipeline for key positions in your organization. Discuss career interests with a diverse cross section of employees and establish development opportunities with specific steps tailored to their interests in pursuit of a more representative workforce.
- Leverage and apply key data sources such as employee viewpoint surveys and employee listening sessions to evaluate where your organization is situated with regard to achieving the core value of inclusion principles and standards; adjust recruiting, hiring, training, and development opportunities and other career path diversity initiatives accordingly.
- Develop effective strategies to recruit and attract a more diverse applicant pool for position vacancies. Examples of such strategies may include increasing the number of outreach events to underrepresented groups in STEM, recruiting from minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and other schools and universities with a broad range of diverse students, etc.
- Advocate for and participate in DEI&A training, learning sessions, activities, and seminars to enhance cultural competency; encourage the sharing of takeaways from training courses. Incorporate newly learned DEI&A information/lessons into the leadership of your team on a day-to-day basis.
- Participate in professional activities that would increase experience in interacting with people from cultural backgrounds other than your own. Share what you have learned and your growth journey with your team, to demonstrate a learning culture.

### **Promote accessibility to NASA's mission, programs, and opportunities**

- Build (or support the building of) a pipeline of talent that includes people with disabilities.

- Identify and/or mentor people who have the skills and attributes necessary for job opportunities.
- Ensure that employees with disabilities have equal opportunities for development and advancement.
- Explicitly include disability as a consideration when recruiting. This can be accomplished by participating in university recruiting events specifically focusing on neurodiversity, or serving on a hiring panel.
- Disseminate information that reflects the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities and the myriad ways accommodations can be provided.
- Engage with disability/veteran employee resource groups (ERGs) to stay informed of issues/concerns in those unique communities.
- Engage with employees – both internal and external to your organization - to understand what attracts them to NASA (as an employer) versus other employers, and what NASA could do/does well to retain talent and expertise.
- Seek and share information from Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity (ODEO) and Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) about technologies available to ensure equipment and facilities are accessible.
- Increase awareness and understanding of the process to request reasonable accommodations.
  - Supervisors only – track reasonable accommodations being provided and regularly review to ensure they are current and effective.
  - Partner with local ODEO team to provide regular training to supervisors on the reasonable accommodation process.